

ADOC 4/8/08

Submission No. 1136

(Inq into better support for carers)

Sent: Thursday, 3 July 2008 6:46 PM
To: Committee, FCHY (REPS)
Subject: House of Representatives Standing Committee on Family

Committee Secretary

Inquiry into Better Support for Carers

House of Representatives Standing Committee on Family,

Community, Housing and Youth

PO Box 6021

Parliament House

CANBERRA ACT 2600

Dear Secretary

I wish to make a submission to the House of Representatives Standing Committee on Family, Community, Housing and Youth's Inquiry into Better Support for Carers.

I am submitting to the Inquiry because...

I am a carer, and life is difficult.

The financial burden on carers, (mainly due to the additional costs due to the medical needs of the dependent person) is crippling. Centrelink payments are already well below the poverty line, but carers mostly suffer more because politicians have their head in the sand, and their empathy is fully concentrating on voting according to their political party so as to ensure preselection.

I doubt if any politician has any real empathy with one or two disabilities and even that is likely to only be theoretical.

More information is attached on a separate sheet

1. The role and contribution of carers in society

As a carer, I feel that my role is...

4/07/2008

Considered by politicians to mean care is provided for those who need support, at a very cheap rate.

This means the politicians can spend more on pleasing the people who make donations to their re-election, and in some cases their own perks!

More information is attached on a separate sheet

2. The barriers to social and economic participation for carers

As a carer, I face the following problems ...

I have to pay higher rent so I am close to the person I care for, yet Centrelink only pays a very small percentage of the rent costs. A much higher rent subsidy is essential to be fair and reasonable, a requirement of Common Law.

I feel extreme humiliation and pain every time I go into Centrelink where most staff receive more than the average wage. While the carer survives on less than 50% of this wage, I used to be a senior public servant – back then many Social Security staff did minimal work and were a long way behind. This leaves them with minimal empathy of the hardship suffered by Centrelink clients.

Centrelink staff make many errors, and decisions are made that ignore Social Security laws: This is then a breach of Duty of Care – for which Centrelink should pay compensation.

Centrelink staff often state that their clients should know what payments they are entitled to – but this is impossible as fortnightly payments vary so much.

More information is attached on a separate sheet

3. The practical measures required to better support carers

As a carer, I need help with ...

Extra financial assistance for respite, so carers can financially take the brake.

Respite for the carer WILL assist in limiting the pain and suffering for the person being cared for.

Respite for the carer WILL assist in maintaining the quality of care for the person being cared for.

More information is attached on a separate sheet

4. Strategies to assist carers to access opportunities and choices

I think the Government can better help carers by ...

I suggest that a new medical system; providing the needs of the person being cared for be activated

immediately. All prescribed medical requirements of the person being cared for should be fully funded.

The system already exists within the Department of Veterans Affairs – the disabled person being cared for at home should be issued immediately with a 'Gold Card' covering the total costs of medical and personal requirements.

A carers Superannuation Scheme should be immediately established. No carer should be worse off than the carer payment and carer allowance together.

Carer hospice should be legislated into law.

More information is attached on a separate sheet

Thank you for taking my views into consideration as part of the Committee's Inquiry. I look forward to reviewing any recommendations you make to improve life for carers in Australia.

Yours sincerely

<i>Signature</i>
<i>Dennis</i>
<i>Print your name</i>
<i>3rd July 2008</i>
<i>Date</i>